

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 AID-05 /036 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5192

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

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ALSO FOR AID

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTIO, BTRA, BBAK, EQIP, EAID, NSEDNINI

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SUBJECT: FOREIGN BUYERS PROGRAM: NIGERIAN PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO.
SEEKS PARTNER

1. SUBJECT COMPANY IS A NEWLYFORMED FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (FMG) ENTITY INTENDED TO ENGAGE IN ALL ASPECTS OF PRINTING AND PUBLISHING ON COMMERCIAL BASIS BUT WITH EMPHASIS ON EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS IN SUPPORT OF FMG'S AMBITIOUS UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION (UPE) AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. INITIAL CAPITALIZATION WILL BE DOLS EIGHT MILLION. PLANT WILL BE IN BENIN CITY, ENUGU, OR NEARBY AREAS SUCH AS ONITSHA. GIVEN MARKET POTENTIAL, NIGERIAN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COULD BECOME NIGERIA'S LARGEST COMMERCIAL PRINTER NOT LONG AFTER INAUGURATION.

2. COMPANY HAS BEEN SEVERAL MONTHS GETTING STARTED AND PRESENTLY CONYPSITS ONLY OF A BOARD OF SIX, MOSTLY GOVERNMENT
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OFFICIALS. ALTHOUGH COMPANY IS MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PROJECT, MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS PROJECT MANAGER BECAUSE PROJECT WILL INVOLVE FOREIGN PARTICIPATION.

3. BOARD MEMBER AND PROJECT MANAGER EMANUEL C. OFFOKAJA, SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER, MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, STATES COMPANY URGENTLY SEEKING FOREIGN TECHNICAL AND EQUITY

PARTNER TO MANAGE AND OPERATE COMPANY. PREFERS AMERICANS BUT ALSO IN CONTACT WITH UK, CANADA AND DENMARK. JOINT VENTURE TERMS SOMEWHAT FLEXIBLE IN THAT BOARD ENVISIONS THAT FMG WOULD HAVE 60 PERCENT EQUITY BUT AGREEABLE TO 50/50 (IF FMG APPROVES) OR TO SMALLER FOREIGN SHARE. SAYS FOREIGN PARTNER MUST HAVE SOME EQUITY. NIGERIAN OWNERSHIP MIGHT ALSO INCLUDE PRIVATE INVESTORS. OFFOKAJA STRESSES THAT BOARD WANTS PARTNER, NOT FMG, TO RUN FIRM ON COMMERCIAL BASIS. SEEKS PARTNERS WITHOUT TIE-IN WITH EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS. EXCLUDES EXISTING NIGERIAN FIRMS. SEARCH IS URGENT BECAUSE FIRM HAS BEEN DELAYED SO LONG IT RISKS BEING ELIMINATED IN NEXT REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES. DESIRES INITIAL RESPONSE NLT DEC. 12 FOR REVIEW MEETING DEC. 13.

4. OFFOKAJA MENTIONED THAT RECENT VISITORS WHO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN PROJECT INCLUDE MRS. ROBERT MCNAMARA, WIFE OF IBRD PRESIDENT, WHO TOURED NIGERIA FEW WEEKS AGO, AND WALTER YOUNG, BROTHER OF USUN AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG. LATTER'S INTEREST WAS COMMERCIAL.

5. OFFOKAJA AND THREE OR FOUR OTHER OFFICIALS WISH TO VISIT U.S. LATE JANUARY OR MID-FEBRUARY AT LATEST TO DISCUSS PROJECT WITH INTERESTED FIRMS. THEY HOPE TO HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION ON BOTH SIDES TO RETURN WITH AT LEAST PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT. (TO DO SO, INTERESTED FIRMS PROBABLY SHOULD VISIT LAGOS FOR PRELIMINARY TALKS.) BOARD IS ALSO SEEKING QUALIFIED PROJECT CO-UNCLASSIFIED

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ORDINATOR, PREFERABLY NIGERIAN, BUT INITIAL EFFORTS SUGGEST BOARD MAY HAVE TO HIRE A FOREIGNER INITIALLY. OFFOKAJA ATTENDED WILLIAMS COLLEGE AND OBTAINED M.A. IN ECONOMICS AT HARVARD LAST YEAR.

7. ACTION REQUESTED:

A. COMMERCE: URGENTLY CONTACT QUALIFIED FIRMS LIKELY TO BE INTERESTED IN PROJECT, INCLUDING TWO FIRMS ALREADY IN CONTACT WITH OFFOKAJA: ADDISON-WESLEY, READING, MASS. AND WELLINGTON MARKETING CO., LIVINGSTON, N.J., PLUS A FIRM WHICH CONTACTED AMBASSADOR ABOUT JUST SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY AS THIS, SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES, INC., 50 WEST 44TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y., 10036, TELEPHONE 212-867-7700, MR. RICHARD ROBINSON, EXT. 711. FIRMS INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING PROJECT SHOULD SEND BROCHURES OR, IDEALLY, REPRESENTATIVE FOR PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS, ANY VIEWS THEY HAVE ON HOW FIRM SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND WHAT IT SHOULD PUBLISH AND TERMS IT INITIALLY ENVISIONS, SUCH AS HOW MUCH EQUITY IT CAN TAKE, ETC., AND SPECIFY WHAT FURTHER INFORMATION NEEDED. MAIL MATERIAL TO: HARVEY CLEW, LAGOS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520, MARKED URGENT OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

B. SUPPLY STANDARD BACKGROUND INFO ON COMPANIES NAMED ABOVE
AND SERIOUS NEW POSSIBILITIES, BY DEC. 12 IF POSSIBLE.

C. AID: THIS PROJECT CLEARLY IN INTERESTS OF NIGERIAN
EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. MRS. MCNAMARA AND OTHER VISITORS
IMPRESSED BY PAUCITY OF SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN NIGERIA. BOARD
LACKS CLEAR IDEA OF COMPANY'S PRODUCT MIX, STRUCTURE, LOCATION,
ETC. ALSO SEEKS PROJECT COORDINATOR PER PARA SIX ABOVE. IF
THERE POSSIBILITY OR INTEREST IN RDP, OPEX OR ANY OTHER AID
PROGRAM IN THIS PROJECT PLEASE ADVISE BY DEC. 12,
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Comment:
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Subject: OCT: FOREIGN BUYERS PROGRAM: NIGERIAN PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO. SEEKS PARTNER
TAGS: BTIO, BTRA, BBAK, EQIP, EAID
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